

25. (NEVER AMENDED) A computer readable storage medium storing a computer program instructing a computer to perform:

storing a plurality of fixed form reply sets, each fixed form reply set containing a plurality of replies;

receiving a message from a host;

selecting a fixed form reply set;

allowing a user to choose a reply from the selected fixed form reply set;

sending the chosen reply to the host; and

computing the frequency of chosen replies sent to the host.

REMARKS

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-25 are pending.

Claim 13 is amended.

In view of the above, it is submitted that claims 1-25 are pending herein for consideration.

II. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-25 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1-25 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Peters et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,842,195 (Hereinafter "Peters").

In the Amendment filed on September 30, 1999, the Applicant presented the following arguments:

However, Peters does not contain a "storage means for storing data for a fixed form reply," as recited in claim 1. In Peters, the data for a fixed form reply is not stored in a storage means but instead included as part of the e-mail which is transmitted (see Peters, Figures 6-11). This is completely different than Peters, as Peters does not have a separate storage for the fixed form reply data (see page 7, lines 16-23 of the specification and Figure 2). Storing the reply data separately instead of entering it directly into the e-mail transmission as in Peters is advantageous in that it can typically save the author the trouble of entering replies and also can save transmission time. Therefore, the configuration of Peters is quite different from the present invention, and it

cannot be said that Peters would render the present invention as claimed in claim 1 obvious.

The Examiner responded in the Office Action with:

Applicant's argument (claim 1) that "Peters does not contain a "storage means for storing data for a fixed form reply" has been considered. In reply, Peters has shown us a storage device. (See # 102 of fig. 13). Peter's invention can also be used on a "bulletin board" and not as an E-mail alone. (See column 3 line 5-13) A bullet board is a computer system (storage) equipped with one or more modems or other means of network access that serve as information and message-passing center for remote users. Users dial into a Bulletin board with their modems and post message to other bulletin board users in special areas to a particular topic, in a manner reminiscent of the posting of notes on a cork bulletin board.

The Applicant replies that Figure 13, # 102 shows a "database." The only corresponding description of Figure 13, #102 in the Specification recites, "Further, just prior to mailing of the survey, the database is created at 102 . . ." As indicated by this description, the questions sent to each respondent in Peters are written by the user before they are sent. Peters does not use fixed form reply data stored in a database. Instead, any reply data in Peters is written by the user each time a message is created. Peters, column 14, line 33, reads, 'In this example, the author (local user) wishes to obtain information from respondents (remote users) as to what leave they will be taking between May and July. The respondents (remote users) may all belong to the same company, for example, and the author (local user) wishes to plan company leave. The author (local user) enters the following question text: "Will you be taking leave from work between 1 May 1994 and 1 July 1994?"' It is clear that the system in Peters requires questions to be entered for each particular survey. Storing fixed form reply data in a database as in the present invention is advantageous over the system in Peters. By the system of Peters, questions have to be created for each survey and the questions also have to be transmitted. The Examiner also states that the system in Peters allows the implementation of a bulletin board. However, this is of no consequence, because a bulletin board system does not store fixed form reply data in a database. There is also no suggestion for the claimed feature present in Peters.

Claims 2-6 are dependent upon claim 1, which in view of the above, should be allowed over the prior art.

Claim 7 recites, "storage means for storing data for a fixed form reply," which in view of the above remarks, should be allowed over the prior art.

Claims 8 is dependent upon claim 7, which in view of the above, should be allowed over the prior art.

Claim 9 recites, "storage means for storing data for a fixed form reply," which in view of the above remarks, should be allowed over the prior art. In addition, claim 9 recites, "communication control means for transmitting said data for a reply to the client apparatus . . . receiving control means for receiving said data for a reply . . ." As discussed above, any reply data transmitted in Peters is sent along with each e-mail, therefore the claimed communication control means and receiving control mean is not required.

Claims 10 -12 are dependent upon claim 9, which in view of the above remarks, should be allowed over the prior art.

Claim 13, in view of the above remarks, should be allowed over the prior art. In addition, claim 13 recites, "control means for accepting a selection out of the outputted data for the first or second fixed form reply based on the category of the message as the reply to the message . . ."

In the Amendment filed September 30, 1999, the Applicant presented the following arguments:

Regarding claim 13, the Examiner has misunderstood the claim. Claim 13 has been amended be more clear. Claim 13 (as amended) recites, "control means for accepting a selection out of the outputted data for the first or second fixed form reply based on the category of the message as the reply to the message." This embodiment is also described on page 22 of the specification. Peters does not relate to selecting a fixed form reply based on the category of the message, and cannot render claim 13 obvious. In addition, claim 13 is also patentable for all for all of the reasons discussed above.

The Examiner responded in the Office Action with:

Applicant's argument that (claim 13) "Peters does not relate to selecting a fixed form reply based on the category of the message, and cannot render claim 13 obvious" has been considered. In reply, See discussion on claim # 9.

In addition, Peter teaches that there could be more than one set of data for the client to reply (see column 5 line 55-68) and the remote user can select any of those data to reply, store the data in a database, (see column 8 line 55-57) and transmit the selected reply to the server. The server can select a question for output to the client base on the type of client's answer. (Category of message)

The Applicant replies that the category of the message is not the same as the type of client's answer, as the Examiner contends. Peter's discloses a system wherein a set of questions are presented, and in response to particular answer chosen by the user, different question can then be presented to the user. In other words, Peters can select different questions based on answers to previous questions. However, the user's answers can be unrelated to the category of the message. For example, consider an example message such as, "there will be a dinner party at 5:00." Because the category of the message is a party, the questions selected might for instance be, "will you attend? How many people will you bring?" Regardless of the user's answers, this does not change the category of the message. Furthermore, the user presents his answers after the question has already been presented. If a fixed form reply based on the category of the message is to be chosen, clearly the fixed form reply cannot be based on the previous answer if this is the first question presented.

Nothing in Peters discloses or suggests such an embodiment as discussed above. As such, claim 13 should be allowed over the prior art.

Claims 14-16 are dependent upon claim 13, and in view of the above, should be allowed over the prior art.

Claim 17, in view of the above remarks with respect to claim 1, should be allowed over the prior art.

Claims 18-20 are dependent upon claim 17, and in view of the above, should be allowed over the prior art.

Claim 21, in view of the above remarks, should be allowed over the prior art. More specifically, claim 21 recites, "a reply data storage device storing a plurality of fixed form reply sets, each fixed form reply set containing a plurality of replies . . ." As stated

above, Peters does not store reply sets. Instead, each possible reply to a message is created, stored, and transmitted directly with the message itself.

Claims 22-24 are dependent upon claim 21, and in view of the above, should be allowed over the prior art.

Claim 25, in view of the above, should be allowed over the prior art. More specifically, claim 25 recites, "storing a plurality of fixed form reply sets . . . receiving a message from a host . . . selecting a fixed form reply set . . ." As discussed above, Peters does not select a fixed form reply set, instead answers to questions are created, stored, and transmitted directly with the message itself.

Therefore, in view of the above, it is submitted that claims 1-25 are in condition for allowance, and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

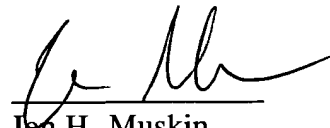
III. CONCLUSION

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If any further fees are required by the submission of this Amendment, please charge same to deposit account no. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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